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ABSTRACT

Adventure education is filled with "doers," which improves practice but does not necessarily enhance theory. This book addresses that gap by examining the philosophy of adventure education. Chapter 1 examines foundational principles, which have their roots in the ideas of philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle, Rousseau, and Dewey, and their application to adventure education. These writers discuss the educational importance of experience, risk, and moral development, which are key elements in the theoretical framework. This chapter also discusses contributions made by the field of psychology. The works of Freud, Erikson, Maslow, and Rogers on such issues as behavior, motivation, and trust have been borrowed by adventure educators to further develop theory and practice. Chapter 2 analyzes the learning process. Traditional methodologies are laden with theory and lacking practice, whereas experiential methods overemphasize practice and exclude theory. An appropriate mix of theory and practice may lead to more meaningful learning. Chapter 3 discusses concepts related to risk, motivation, and freedom. Assertions that risk is controllable and humans are not motivated devalue risk and human nature, contradict the philosophy of adventure education, and should be removed from the literature. Chapter 4 notes how program advertising that promises personal growth, learning transference, or moral development may be misleading because these are difficult to measure and assess. The field should not make promises, such as the delivery of life-changing experiences, it cannot deliver. Contains references in each chapter and a bibliography. (TD)

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